

# What's your Number?

**Name:** Simon Taylor  
**Company:** British Seed Houses  
**Position:** Amenity Director



**How long have you been in the industry?**  
 "22 years."

**How did you get into it?**

"I come from a farming background. I spent three years at Harper Adams Agricultural College, where I qualified with a HND. After a spell with a haulage company I wanted to get back into agriculture and saw a job advertised for a Cereal Grain Trader for British Seed Houses. I got turned down in the interview, but later was contacted saying a job had come up on the agricultural grass side. Within 12 months, I was selling on the amenity side. I became a Director in 1999."

**What do you like about your current job?**

"It's quite varied. It's very much a hands-on position. You can be dealing with clients from all ends of the spectrum, while looking

after the commercial end in terms of budget and finance. One area that interests me is marketing and PR – what I call, the sharp end of the market. At the other end, bringing new material to the market is also very interesting, although somewhat frustrating at times as it is such a long process."

**What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?**

"The biggest change has been in the number of major seed wholesalers. There used to be around 20 and now there's only four. Also the improvement in cultivar has been tremendous which has helped turf managers improve the quality of their playing surface, but equally skills of the turf industry have come on leaps and bounds. We all expect higher standards these days."

**What do you like to do in your spare time?**

"I am a keen road cyclist and race occasionally. I also do the odd marathon - I ran the Loch Ness Marathon in October in 3hrs 22mins, which I thought wasn't too bad for an old duffer like me. I also have two teenage boys who are pretty mad on sport so between

me and my wife, we spend a fair bit of time being a taxi service."

**Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?**

"Sitting in a nice climate with a good bottle of wine, but probably not in reality. I've been with British Seed Houses a long time and I want to see the company grow in strength and stature within the industry. I always like a challenge, I've had plenty and am sure will face many more over the next 10 years."

**Who do you consider to be your best friends in the industry?**

"They always say, never mix work and pleasure, and that's true with friends and business, but there are many friendly people in this industry. Everyone in the industry is a friend apart from the odd few who I wouldn't care to name."

**Pick a number**

"13."

**Simon has picked Richard Earl from TurfTrax to take part in next month's feature.**

WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

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## Q: What do all these clubs have in common?

St Andrews  
 Carnoustie  
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 Troon  
 Muirfield  
 Royal Liverpool  
 Royal Lytham St Annes  
 Royal St Georges

